Israel Stands Alone

by [Walter E. Block](#) (May 2024)

Victory of 1967 —by Alex Levin, 2016

Consider this claim against the IDF: "If you're chasing a murderer and he runs into a building full of kids, you can't just blow up the building."

This sounds eminently reasonable. It is horrible to contemplate blowing up an entire building under such circumstances and killing all the inhabitants, the one guilty person amongst a sea of innocent children.

However, consider, also, the following: Suppose doing precisely that is the only way to stop this killer. Suppose that if you do not blow up the entire building, also killing all the youngsters therein, the murderer will escape and, in the future, he will assassinate many more kids than those who are in that building right now.

Posit, further, that this building has only the murderer's progeny in it. Stipulate that the only way to save your own kids is to blow up the building with his kids in it. He is a cowardly murderer, using his own children as shields. He depends upon your mercy, your decency, not to blow him up along with his own kids. If you follow this path, you and your whole family and all your offspring will be murdered. Tortured too. These considerations, surely, put a different face in these hypotheticals.

Hamas still holds some 100 innocent Israeli citizens hostage. Israel usually operates on a 10 to 1 basis (it should be 100 to 1, but let that pass). Would the IDF then be justified in taking hostage 1000 random Gazans, heavily weighted in the direction of women and children, and matching their fate to however Hamas deals with its own captives? This sounds horrendous. But, what if it is the only way to safeguard the lives of the Israelis now held by Hamas?

The Arab League met and unanimously [demanded](#) a cease-fire in Gaza. The members of this organization include the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Did any of them volunteer to accept as many as a single Gazan as a refugee? No. Ditto for the UN. The latter group voted overwhelmingly for an immediate cease-fire.

A Canadian immigration officer was once asked, in the late 1930s, how many Jewish refugees he would accept from Germany?

"None is too many" was his infamous [answer](). It would appear that the Arab League has borrowed a leaf from the Canadians. That is exactly how many Gazan refugees they are willing to accept. Hypocrisy, thy name is the Arab League.

Even strong supporters of Israel make too many concessions to its enemies. For example, one such [wrote](): "Yes, many Jews readily acknowledge, Israel bears its share of the blame for this hundred-year conflict." No. The only "blame" Israel bears is being too soft of its enemies. Too many leaflets. Too many warnings. Too much "mowing of the grass" when far harsher responses would have been fully and entirely justified.

Ok, ok, I, too, will now bash Israel (who am I not to get on the bandwagon?): Israel has had far too much socialism in its past, and still has, at present. If it has been more open to capitalism, to economic freedom, to liberty for entrepreneurs, and less tolerant of labor unionism (Histadrut), it would have been far wealthier than it now is. And, with greater economic power it would have been more able to defend itself; less dependent upon its fair-weather friends abroad.

Israel should never have given up the Sinai Peninsula, which it won fair and square in a [defensive war]() in 1967. If it now had control over that relatively large land mass, it could have banished the Gazans to that faraway place. Let them build a few tunnels from that terrain.

As to the bombings and the tunnel obliteration, let that continue until all hostages are released, and Hamas surrenders to Israel. Is that not the purpose of a war? To have the enemy lay down its arms? This has not yet occurred. Far from it.

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Walter E. Block is Harold E. Wirth Endowed Chair and Professor of Economics, College of Business, Loyola University New Orleans, and senior fellow at the Mises Institute. He earned his PhD in economics at Columbia University in 1972. He has taught at Rutgers, SUNY Stony Brook, Baruch CUNY, Holy Cross and the University of Central Arkansas. He is the author of more than 600 refereed articles in professional journals, three dozen books, and thousands of op eds (including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and numerous others). He lectures widely on college campuses, delivers seminars around the world and appears regularly on television and radio shows. He is the Schlarbaum Laureate, Mises Institute, 2011; and has won the Loyola University Research Award (2005, 2008) and the Mises Institute's Rothbard Medal of Freedom, 2005; and the Dux Academicus award, Loyola University, 2007. Prof. Block counts among his friends Ron Paul and Murray Rothbard. He was converted to libertarianism by Ayn Rand. Block is old enough to have played chess with Friedrich Hayek and once met Ludwig von Mises, and shook his hand. Block has never washed that hand since. So, if you shake his hand (it's pretty dirty, but what the heck) you channel Mises.

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